

REMARKS

Applicants have received and carefully reviewed the Final Office Action mailed February 6, 2004. Claims 1, 2, 8 and 10-13 were rejected. Claims 5-7, 9, 14 and 15 were objected to, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 1, 2 and 16-27 have been canceled. Claims 5, 9 and 14 have been rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 5-15 are pending. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

As a preliminary matter, Applicants bring to the Examiner's attention that formal drawings were submitted on October 22, 2001, but there has been no indication of approval of the drawings by the Examiner or the Official Draftsman. Applicants request that the Examiner/Official Draftsman indicate approval or non-approval of the formal drawings with the next PTO communication.

Claims 1, 2, 8 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Kurth et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,790,970. After carefully reviewing the Examiner's arguments and the cited reference, Applicants respectfully disagree.

However, in order to expedite allowance of the objected claims, Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 2 and amended claims 8 and 10 to depend from claim 5 which is now rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Thus, the rejection is rendered moot in view of the amendment.

Claims 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kurth et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,790,970 in view of *Donald*, U.S. Patent No. 3,404,203. After carefully reviewing the Examiner's arguments and the cited references, Applicants respectfully disagree.

However, in order to expedite allowance of the objected claims, Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 2 and amended claims 11-13 to depend from claim 5 which is now rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Thus, the rejection is rendered moot in view of the amendment.

Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is requested. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at (612) 677-9050.

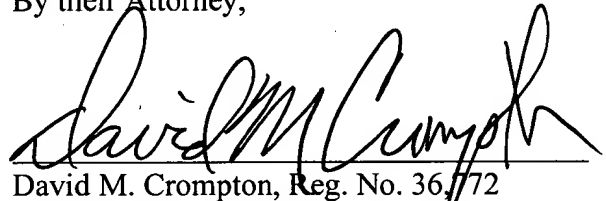
Respectfully submitted,

Albert Chin et al.

By their Attorney,

Date: _____

4/5/04



David M. Crompton, Reg. No. 36,772
CROMPTON, SEAGER & TUFTE, LLC
1221 Nicollet Avenue, Suite 800
Minneapolis, MN 55403-2420
Telephone: (612) 677-9050
Facsimile: (612) 359-9349